



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
McDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**MARCH 3, 2016**

**Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park  
8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Road  
Scottsdale, AZ 85255**

**FINAL APPROVED SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Robert Frost, Chairman (arrived at 5:10 p.m.)  
Mike Milillo, Vice Chair  
Steve Dodd, Commissioner  
Con Englehorn, Commissioner  
Jace McKeighan, Commissioner  
James Heitel, Commissioner  
Cynthia Wenstrom, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Bill Murphy  
Kroy Ekblaw  
Liz Hildenbrand

**GUESTS:** Mike Nolan  
Christine Kovach  
John Holmes

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Heitel called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Members present as noted above.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Approval of Regular Meeting minutes of February 4, 2016**

**COMMISSIONER HEITEL MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 4, 2016 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR FROST WAS NOT YET PRESENT.**

**5. MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE** (Discussion begins at 5:04; approximately 3 minutes into the meeting)

Mike Nolan reported that the steward programs will be changing leadership beginning on April 1st. The new steward orientations including the final two scheduled for March and April have sold out, closing the season with approximately 150 people trained.

On March 1st, Game and Fish flew the first deer monitoring data collection flight and had good results.

Mr. Nolan noted that the Field Institute staff and City of Scottsdale Preserve staff are regularly meeting every other month in an effort to strengthen communication channels.

The Junior Citizen Science Festival is scheduled for Friday, March 11th at Lost Dog Wash from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**6. DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER PROCESS AND LIAISON UPDATE**  
(Discussion begins at 5:08; approximately 7 minutes into the meeting)

**A. City and DDCS staff will provide an update on Public Process**

Mr. Ekblaw noted that Gary Meyer, Capital Projects Project Manager, is acting as the lead staff member and contract administrator with DDCS. Preserve staff continues to be involved in the study of the Gateway site.

Christine Kovach gave an overview of the history behind the Desert Discovery Center and the proposed Gateway location as well as the process going forward and introduced a list of the Board of Directors which includes: Lynne Lagarde, Mike Surguine, Sam Campana, Randy Schilling, Dick Bowers, Joan Fudala, Dan Gruber, and Melinda Gulick. She discussed the vision, including prospective economic impact; DDCS's mission to focus on innovation, education, and research. She noted that the scope of work includes: an RFP for experienced designers, which is in the process of being written; partnership opportunities; the architectural design RFQ, which has been released with a presubmittal meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 9th; the economic impact analysis will be ongoing throughout the 18-month process; a fundraising feasibility study; community branding and marketing; and community outreach. Information is available on [scottsdaleaz.gov](http://scottsdaleaz.gov), search DDC.

Commission members were given an opportunity to make comments. In response to questions about community outreach, Mr. Ekblaw explained that Gary Meyer, Dan

Worth, Mayor Lane, and other council members are expected to attend the Windgate Ranch Community event. Commissioner Heitel discussed his concerns, which included the lack of a complete concept for a Desert Discovery Center and the 30-acre master site plan; the potential for use of voter approved Preserve funds; and developing the DDC in accordance with the current Preserve Ordinance.

It was the consensus of the Commission to ask a representative from the City Attorney's Office to attend a Commission meeting to discuss the project and what would be allowable under the existing ordinance.

Ms. Kovach explained that DDCS's goal is to work in synergy with McDowell Sonoran Conservancy and other organizations on projects and to expand research and education opportunities.

John Holmes expressed concern that the DDCS website is inconsistent with the public presentation; about the potential for using Preserve funds inappropriately; and about duplication of education and research efforts.

- B. Clarify from the February 4th Commission meeting, that the role of Commission Liaison to the DDC Process will only be to observe the public process for the DDC Study and report back to the Commission

Commissioner Heitel noted that since Vice Chair Milillo's appointment as liaison between the MSPC and the DDCS, he has been listed as an advocate for the DDCS on their website, which could be perceived as a conflict of interest. He felt that the role of the MSPC Liaison needed clarification. Vice Chair Milillo said that his understanding of the role is that he was to observe the DDCS meetings and provide a monthly report the Commission on their activities.

Mr. Ekblaw said that he expects there will be many public meetings that anyone is able to attend during the process. Staff can provide a report to the Commission on administrative meetings and other non-advertised meetings, such as HOA meetings, that DDCS and staff could be invited to attend. The Commission Liaison can attend non-public meetings and report back.

Commission members confirmed their decision to designate Vice Chair Millilo as a liaison between the Commission and DDCS, Inc.

7. **STAFF REPORTS** (Discussion begins at 5:49; approximately 48 minutes into the meeting)

- Trails Update

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed northern area trails and areas between corridors five and six, noting that the areas that are not being utilized by new routing will be restored. Improvements are ongoing in Corridor 8. An evaluation of Corridor 7 will begin in the near future.

- Fraesfield/Granite Mountain

Mr. Ekblaw asked that Commissioners review the list of public comments on Fraesfield/Granite Mountain that have been received before the next meeting. Discussion of next steps in the process will be agendaized for the April meeting.

- State Legislative Activity

Mr. Ekblaw announced that there is a bill currently moving through the House that would legalize some aerial fireworks. If the bill passes, there would be a concern about dangers to the Preserve, because even with the one-mile buffer, projectile fireworks could find their way into the Preserve boundaries.

Government Relations Liaison Brad Lundahl is monitoring the bill's progress and preparing to address the Senate if the bill makes it out of the House. Staff is in contact with the MSC and will keep Commissioners and MSC stewards apprised of the activities.

- Land Acquisition Update

Mr. Ekblaw noted that the State Land Department did make a resubmittal for their zoning case and addressed concerns including edge issues and replacing commercial zoning along Scottsdale Road with residential zoning. He expects that the State Land Zoning case will go to the Planning Commission in late April or early May and to Council in late May or early June. An item asking for a MSPC recommendation will be on the April agenda.

The City of Scottsdale's case to rezone residential areas to conservation open space will come forward in the next few months along with an amendment focusing on the Preserve as part of the definition of conservation open space.

Commissioner Heitel commended the State Land Department for their efforts and cooperation with the City of Scottsdale in their efforts to create the Preserve.

- Endowment Proposal

Mr. Ekblaw noted that the Endowment Proposal is scheduled to go to City Council on April 12th with a potential 4:00 p.m. start time.

Chair Frost asked that Commissioner Heitel join him in representing the Commission at the Council meeting, even if his term has ended.

- Preserve Audit

Mr. Murphy reviewed the audit that was done by the City Auditor on Preserve Operations. Auditor recommendations included:

- A recommendation to create a cost center specific budget. The City has agreed to review the issue as part of the FY 2017/18 budget.
- Give estimates for future planning. The department has come up with a ten-year projection as part of the endowment review.

- Review the agreement between the City of Scottsdale and the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. The City and the Conservancy will review the agreement as part of the annual activities recap.
- Record parcels previously donated to the City in the City's financial portfolio. Staff will ensure the parcels are properly recorded.
- Offer users requesting use permits an appeal process. Staff opines that the MSPC is the proper channel for appeals.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Ekblaw explained that the notation that "cost projections do not include costs associated with new and expanded trailheads" refers to projections that were done over the past two years related to the endowment and targeting Fraesfield and Granite and were not updated prior to the submittal to the auditor. Ms. Hildenbrand explained that trailhead projected costs submitted to the auditor only included development costs and not the operation costs.

The Commission asked that the auditor's report be included on a future agenda for further discussion.

- Future Meeting Location Options

Mr. Murphy asked Commissioners to review the list of other City facilities as options for future meetings. Chair Frost asked that Commission members email him with their preferences, noting that the Ordinance allows for the Chairman to decide on the meeting location.

**8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS** (Discussion begins at 6:05; approximately 1 hour and 4 minutes into the meeting)

Commissioner Englehorn commended Commissioner Heitel for the outstanding work he did with the land acquisition program.

Ms. Hildenbrand noted that the intercept surveys at the trailheads would begin this weekend.

**9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

April (Date to be determined) Items:

- Wildlife Report - AZ Game and Fish
- Land Acquisition - ASLD and COS rezoning cases - Auction
- Fraesfield/Granite Mountain
- Sunrise Restroom Concept - Public Feedback

Additional requested agenda items include further discussion on the audit and a presentation on Preserve promotion planning.

Other Future Items:

- Drone status

**10.     ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.